

What is claimed is:

1. An ink jet device comprising at least one printhead arranged to eject ink drops in a spitting operation and a spittoon arranged to store said ejected ink, said device  
5 further comprising a temporary spittoon arranged to move between first and second positions, said temporary spittoon being arranged in said first position such that said ink drops are ejected onto a surface of said temporary spittoon, said temporary spittoon being further arranged to transfer said ink to said spittoon when in said second position.

2. A device according to claim 1, wherein said surface of said temporary spittoon is approximately 1 mm to 10 mm from said printhead when said temporary spittoon is in said first position.

3. A device according to claim 2, wherein said temporary spittoon is located such that the spitting distance is approximately 6 mm from said printhead when said temporary spittoon is in said first position.

4. A device according to any of claims 1 to 3, wherein said surface of said  
20 temporary spittoon is substantially horizontal when said temporary spittoon is in said first position.

5. A device according to claim 4, wherein said temporary spittoon is mounted on a shuttle, said shuttle being arranged to move said temporary spittoon between said  
25 first and second positions.

6. A device according to claim 5, wherein said temporary spittoon is arranged to be orientated in a first orientation when in said first position and in a second orientation different to said first orientation when positioned in said second position,  
30 such that when positioned in said second position said temporary spittoon is arranged to transfer said ink on said spittoon surface under gravity.

7. A device according to claim 6, wherein said temporary spittoon is rotatably mounted to said shuttle and is arranged to rotate about said mounting between said first and said second orientations.

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8. A device according to claim 7, wherein said temporary spittoon is arranged to rotate about said mounting under the action of one or more cam surfaces.

9. A device according to claim 6, wherein said temporary spittoon comprises a flexible material fixedly mounted to said shuttle, said temporary spittoon being arranged to bend or deform between said first and said second orientations.

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10. A device according to claim 9, wherein said temporary spittoon is arranged to bend or deform under the action of one or more cam surfaces.

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11. A device according to claim 10, wherein said shuttle is further arranged to urge said temporary spittoon against a further surface when said temporary spittoon is approximately located in said second position, forcing said ink from said temporary spittoon surface.

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12. A device according to claim 11, wherein said surface of said temporary spittoon is manufactured from a plastics material.

13. A device according to claim 11, wherein said surface of said temporary spittoon is manufactured from a foam material.

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14. A device according to claim 5, further comprising a printhead servicing element comprising a cap or a wiper arranged to be movable between a non-active position distant from said printhead and an active position adjacent to said printhead, wherein, the movement of said temporary spittoon is linked to that of said servicing element such that said temporary spittoon is arranged to be in said first position

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when said servicing element is in said non-active position and to be in said second position when said servicing element is in active position.

15. A device according to claim 14, wherein said active position of said servicing element corresponds to said first position of said temporary spittoon.

16. A device according to claim 5, further comprising a plurality of pens, wherein in said first position said temporary spittoon is arranged such that ink drops ejected in spitting operations by one or more of said plurality of pens are ejected onto a surface of said temporary spittoon.

17. A device according to claim 16, wherein said temporary spittoon further comprises one or more holes, arranged such that ink ejected by one or more of said pens may pass directly to a non-temporary spittoon.

18. A device according to claim 16, further comprising one or more scrapers arranged remove ink from said temporary spittoon surface as said temporary spittoon moves between said first and second positions.

19. A device according to claim 5, wherein said device is arranged such that in said second position said temporary spittoon is located substantially in contact with said spittoon or ink stored therein, said temporary spittoon being adapted such that said ink on said temporary spittoon surface is able to flow from said temporary spittoon to said spittoon.

20. A device according to claim 5, wherein said temporary spittoon comprises a porous body adapted to allow said ink on said temporary spittoon surface to flow through said temporary spittoon to said spittoon.

21. A device according to any claim 5, wherein the ink jet device is a printer.

22. An inkjet printhead servicing assembly comprising a spittoon arranged to store ink ejected by an inkjet printhead in a spitting operation, the assembly further comprising a spitting surface movable between a first and a second position, said spitting surface being arranged to receive ink drops ejected by said inkjet printhead in a spitting operation and being arranged to move to said second position and from said second position to transfer said ink to said spittoon.

23. An ink jet device comprising at least one print head arranged to eject ink drops in a spitting operation and a spittoon arranged to store said ejected ink, the device further comprising a temporary spittoon arranged to move between first and second positions, in said first position said temporary spittoon being located in close proximity to a nozzle plate of said printhead and arranged such that said ejected ink drops are directed onto a surface of said temporary spittoon, in said second position said temporary spittoon being arranged to transfer said ink to said spittoon and being located sufficiently distant from said nozzle plate to allow a capping or wiping operation to be performed.

24. An inkjet printhead servicing assembly comprising a spitting surface and a cap assembly, said servicing assembly further comprising a reciprocating shuttle arranged to move between first and second positions and to actuate said spitting surface and said cap assembly, said servicing assembly being arranged such that when said shuttle is in said first position said cap assembly is located distant to a nozzle plate of said printhead and said spitting surface is located in close proximity to said nozzle plate such that ink ejected from said nozzle plate during a spitting routine is ejected onto said spitting surface, said servicing assembly being further arranged such that when said shuttle is in said second position said cap assembly substantially caps said nozzle plate and said spitting surface is located in a position such that said ink ejected onto said spitting surface is transferable under gravity to a permanent ink storage container.

25. A method of servicing an inkjet printhead with a servicing assembly, said servicing assembly comprising a spittoon arranged to store ink ejected by said ink jet printhead in a spitting operation, and a spitting surface, the method comprising the steps of:

5        locating said spitting surface in a first position such that drops ejected by said ink jet printhead in a spitting operation are ejected onto said spitting surface;

         moving said spitting surface to a second position such that said ejected drops may be transferred to said spittoon.

10    26. A method according to claim 24, further comprising the step of capping or wiping said printhead when said spitting surface is in said second position.